

Worksession

Agenda Item #	2
Meeting Date	September 17, 2007
Prepared By	David Suls Associate Planner
Approved By	Barbara B. Matthews City Manager

Discussion Item	Discussion of Proposed Community Legacy Application
Background	<p>The Community Legacy program is a comprehensive planning-based program designed to implement revitalization strategies for entire communities rather than focusing on individual projects. It is intended to both complement and supplement existing State programs. Financial assistance is available to help communities with a variety of capital projects in support of planned redevelopment. Operating subsidies are also available, though the funding is more limited. Community Legacy funds are awarded on a competitive basis with the average award being \$125,000 for capital projects, \$20,000 for operating subsidies.</p> <p>The State of Maryland announced in mid-August that it is accepting applications for the FY08 Community Legacy program. Funding priorities include projects which have a strategic economic impact, evidence of other funding commitments and are clearly part of ongoing revitalization efforts. As part of the application, the State requires that projects be ranked in order of priority for the community. A single application - with multiple projects - may be submitted for any approved Community Legacy Area. Projects must be supported by the revitalization plan approved by the State for the specific Community Legacy Area.</p> <p>The City of Takoma Park is considered a single Community Legacy Area and as such, while other community development and Maryland Main Street organizations such as the Old Takoma Business Association / Main Street Takoma are eligible applicants, they are precluded from submitting an application separate from the City. The City's Community Legacy Plan consists of the Takoma Park Master Plan and Takoma 2010 Report.</p> <p>The proposed Community Legacy application to be considered by the Council on September 17 includes staff initiated projects in support of the Council's budget priorities as well as those proposed by the Old Takoma Business Association and Historic Takoma, Inc. The projects are presented below and ranked based upon the approved Community Legacy Plan and the priorities identified by the Council during the FY08 budget process.</p> <p>1) <u>New Hampshire Avenue Corridor Initiative (\$200,000)</u>: The proposal provides for the implementation of a variety of economic development projects and includes increased business support, capital improvements, and place making improvements. (FY08 Budget Priority: Redevelopment of the New Hampshire Avenue Corridor - Marketing, Business Development, Facade Improvements; Master Plan Recommendation; Takoma 2010 priority area and economic development goal.)</p>

	<p>2) <u>Neighborhood Commercial Area Enhancements (\$180,000)</u>: The proposal allows for the implementation of several of the small scale projects identified by the community during the Master Plan workshops conducted throughout the spring of 2007. Recommended improvements range from landscaping, public art, facade improvements, signage, and other place making investments. (FY08 Budget Priority: General Development - Commercial Area / Master Plan workshops; Master Plan recommendation; Takoma 2010 priority area and economic development goal)</p> <p>3) <u>Main Street Takoma (TBD)</u>: The proposal, developed by the Old Takoma Business Association (OTBA), includes the establishment of a revolving loan fund for building and site improvements in the Main Street area and the development of a market study. Additional information will be presented by Ms. Roz Grigsby, OTBA Executive Director, and Mr. Dan Robinson, Chair of the Old Takoma Main Street's Economic Restructuring Committee. (Takoma 2010 economic development /community identity goal.)</p> <p>4) <u>Historic Takoma, Inc. (TBD)</u>: Historic Takoma proposes to refurbish the organization's building in Takoma Junction. Additional information on this project will be presented by Ms. Sabrina Baron, President of Historic Takoma, Inc. (Takoma 2010 economic development /community identity goal.)</p> <p>The Council is asked to comment on the proposed projects and to rank them based upon established budgetary priorities and their impact on established community objectives.</p>
Policy	Council approves grant applications which could significantly impact the City's budget.
Fiscal Impact	N/A
Attachments	Community Legacy FAQ Sheet
Recommendation	To rank proposed Community Legacy projects in order of their priority.
Special Consideration	<p>The Council will be asked to adopt a Resolution authorizing the submission of the proposed Community Legacy application. Said action is tentatively scheduled for September 24, 2007.</p> <p>The application deadline is October 2, 2007.</p>

Frequently Asked Questions(Revised 08/03)

Get Answers:

- [What are Community Legacy Areas?](#)
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Q: What are Community Legacy Areas?

A: Community Legacy will assist urban neighborhoods, suburban communities and small towns that are experiencing decline and disinvestment, but that have the potential, with modest public and private investment, to again be vibrant places to live and work. These areas are often referred to as "at-risk" or "transitional" communities. Indications of decline include dropping property values, population loss, decreasing income and education levels, increasing housing and commercial vacancies. Indications of community strength include proximity to town centers, major employers and educational institutions; partnerships with local banks, other businesses, and community organizations; and community leadership.

Q: How will Community Legacy Support Neighborhood Revitalization?

A: Community Legacy will stabilize existing communities, which have significant public and private investment in education and other cultural institutions, parks, water and sewer, streets and sidewalks. These communities have the potential for a beauty and spirit that is nearly impossible to build new. If our existing communities can attract families and businesses, Maryland's revitalization's goals can be achieved; Maryland's towns and cities will once again be vibrant centers of community; thousands of acres of farmland and open space will be protected from sprawl development; and State taxpayers will not be asked to meet the social and economic costs of abandoned communities while simultaneously meeting the costs of new growth.

Q: How is Community Legacy Different from existing State Resources?

A: State revitalization resources have restrictions on eligible applicants or uses that have resulted in gaps in support for local revitalization efforts. Community Legacy will provide funding in flexible financing to meet the unique needs of each community it serves. Funds will be used to both complement and supplement existing State resources.

Rather than request support for an individual project, participating communities must develop a comprehensive revitalization strategy that is an ambitious but reasonable response to local needs. By offering funding for several diverse initiatives simultaneously, Community Legacy can help local governments and their partners implement comprehensive strategies that give a community the necessary momentum to reverse decline.

Q: What types of Activities will Community Legacy Support?

A: Community Legacy will support a wide range of local initiatives aimed at attracting new residents and businesses, and encouraging existing residents and businesses to remain in a community. These local activities might include:

- Incentives to attract homebuyers to purchase and rehabilitate homes;
- Incentives to existing homeowners and businesses to improve their properties;
- Development of mixed-use projects that may combine housing, retail, office, public, and open space uses;
- Incentives to supermarkets and other large businesses that can offer significant benefits to a community;
- Streetscape improvements along streets that are not state highways or streets that serve important transit functions;
- Strategic demolition and land acquisition that can make redevelopment possible;
- Support for the cost of personnel and other non-capital expenses needed to assure the success of a

comprehensive revitalization effort.

Q: How will Community Legacy leverage other Investment?

A: The leverage of other public and private resources will be key criteria in selecting a Community Legacy area, but the program does not have a specific match requirement. Instead, local governments may leverage Community Legacy funds in a wide variety of ways, including reduced property taxes for residents, businesses, or new development projects; innovative public financing including tax increment financing; commitments from private lenders, foundations or federal sources; donated property; and the local government's cash or in-kind resources.

**Q: How will we know if Community Legacy is Successful?**

A: Progress will be measured at two levels: Each Community Legacy application must propose benchmarks based upon the revitalization strategy it proposes. For example, if a community is working to increase homeownership, increasing house sales and homeownership rates would be appropriate measures. If a community is focusing its effort on a commercial district, reduced commercial vacancy and increased State sales tax revenue could be measured. Anecdotal information which can indicate improving confidence in a community will be used to supplement data. Communities will report their progress to the Department of Housing and Community Development quarterly and DHCD will summarize these reports for the General Assembly annually.

Q: Does the Community Legacy Statute grant State Government Condemnation Authority?

A: The Statute does not grant the State condemnation authority. They do give the Department of Housing and Community Development the right to settle debts or obligations not met by the sponsor through the foreclosure and acquisition of failed projects.

Q: Where can i find Current Census Data?

A: Most of the 2000 census data can be obtained directly from the Maryland Department of Planning at http://www.mdp.state.md.us/msdc/dw_census2000.htm or the US Census Bureau website at <http://www.census.gov>.

Q: Does the Local Support Resolution have to be included with the application?

A: All documents must be included with the application.

Q: Will Repayment of Funds Requested be an additional consideration in the Rating of the Application?

A: Yes. It is legislatively mandated that DHCD give priority to those project showing the likelihood of repayment. Click here for [repayment examples \(PDF\)](#) .

For More Information:

For Information About the Program:
Contact the Community Legacy Project Managers
Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Division of Neighborhood Revitalization
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